

June 25, 2021

CELEBRATE INDEPENDENCE DAY THE HEALTHY AND SAFE WAY



Independence Day is one of the most anticipated holidays on the calendar. Whether you choose to celebrate by enjoying a relaxing day at the beach, a picnic at the park, or watching fireworks, it pays to enjoy the holiday safely.



To help keep your family gatherings memorable for all the right reasons, your West Central Florida County Health Departments serving Citrus, Hardee, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk and Sarasota counties offer these important tips:

- COVID-19 is still circulating. If you have not yet done so, be sure to get your vaccination. This is the best way to prevent contracting the illness. The vaccine is readily available at most pharmacies and doctors' offices. For locations where it is offered, please visit floridahealthcovid19.gov/vaccines/vaccine-locator/
- Wear a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 to protect yourself from harmful ultraviolet rays. Be sure to reapply often and seek shade between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. when the sun is the strongest.
- Drink plenty of water during the heat of the day. Dehydration can be a major threat during Florida's sweltering heat.
- Know the signs of heat illness and seek shade and air conditioning during the hottest parts of the day.
- If you are swimming at the beach or in a pool, never leave children unattended. It takes only a moment of inattentiveness for a tragedy to happen. Assign someone to watch young swimmers. For more information, visit www.watersmartfl.com.
- At your picnic, keep hot foods above 140 degrees after cooking and use ice or refreezable cold packs in insulated coolers to keep cold items at 40 degrees or cooler to prevent foodborne illness.
- The summer is prime time for Florida's mosquitoes. Apply a mosquito repellent to keep them – and the diseases they may carry – away from you.
- Fireworks are a traditional part of the Independence Day experience. Remember that they can cause severe injuries. If you plan to use your own fireworks, visit the National Council on Fireworks Safety website at www.fireworkssafety.org for important safety tips. Or, you can always leave the show to the professionals.

- Remember that pets can be frightened by fireworks, so plan accordingly if you know how your pet will react.

For more safety tips and information, please call your local Florida Department of Health office:

- DOH Citrus - (352) 527-0068
- DOH Hardee - (863) 773-4161
- DOH Hernando - (352) 540-6800
- DOH Highlands - (863) 386-6040
- DOH Hillsborough - (813) 307-8000
- DOH Manatee - (941) 748-0747
- DOH Pasco - (727) 619-0300
- DOH Pinellas - (727) 824-6900
- DOH Polk - (863) 519-7900
- DOH Sarasota - (941) 861-2900

Here's hoping for a safe, happy and healthy Independence Day from your West Central Florida Department of Health offices.

About the Florida Department of Health

The Department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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